



# THE INDIAN JOURNAL OF THEOLOGY

Christian Pramanas

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Mohammed's Misconception of  
The Trinity

Worship

Fifty Years of Scottish Theology

Book Reviews

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# The Christian Pramanas

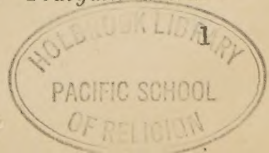
OR

## The Norms of Theological Thought

A. J. APPASAMY

It would be useful in this article to discuss the norms of theological thought. They are known in Sanskrit as *Pramanas*. Every great theologian in India makes clear at the outset of his enquiry the *Pramanas* which he proposes to follow. *Shabda* (Scripture), *Anumana* (Reason) and *Pratyaksha* (Perception) are the best-known *Pramanas*. My father was a devout Hindu who became a Christian in his youth. He wrote several small books expounding Christianity. Following this well-known Indian classification of *Pramanas*, he sought to support the statements he made with Scripture, Reason and Experience. The order in which these *Pramanas* should be followed may be mentioned first. Psychologically the right order is Scripture, Reason and Experience. In early childhood the truths of religion are conveyed to us in the stories of the Bible; as grown-up children we are taught the Bible in the Church and in the Sunday School; in youth we seek to understand with the God-given gift of human reason those religious truths which we have learnt. There come moments of religious experience, in youth, middle age and old age, in fact any time and often many times, when these truths are realized with a vividness and power which no religious teaching by others, the study of the Bible or the diligent exercise of the human reason to understand what is taught can ever give. This order may also be regarded as the correct theological order.

The great truths of the Christian religion are found in the Bible. It is the standard of our faith and is clear and definite. It is the first and foremost *Pramana*, the highest court of appeal for every one. With the aid of reason we may and should endeavour to understand what is set out in the Bible. All our efforts with the aid of human reason are of no avail unless they are supported by our religious experience. Prayer is not real because it stands to human reason that a good and loving God who has created us responds to our prayer. But prayer is real supremely because we have found in our practical experience that God answers prayers. All these *Pramanas*, Scripture, Reason and Experience, work together to establish firmly our faith. It may be pointed out that this is not, however, the correct historical order. What first took place in the history of the Christian religion was the direct contact of God with the Prophets and Apostles of the Bible and the appearance on this earth of the Incarnate Jesus. Thus the revelation of God was given in the first instance directly by God to the Prophets and Apostles. *Pratyaksha* was



really, in point of time, the first *Pramana*. This *Pratyaksha* was recorded in the Bible, which became another *Pramana*. We, living in the twentieth century, should make the Bible the primary *Pramana*, as we cannot afford to throw away the legacy of the past.

It is characteristic of Hindu thought with its lack of recognition of the corporate character of religion, that no reference is made in it to the institutional element. There is another *Pramana* of very great importance and that is the teaching of the Church, *Sabha*. This should certainly be added to the three *Pramanas*, viz. *Shabda*, *Anumana* and *Pratyaksha*, acknowledged in India as valid. In the order of importance; its legitimate place is immediately after the Word of God in the Bible. Even as children we are influenced by the Church long before we can grasp its significance. Without a recognition of God's Presence in the Church, Christian thought and experience is woefully incomplete. It is of the essence of the Christian religion that God reveals Himself not merely to individuals but to His Church. The Hindu religion fails disastrously in this respect. It only recognizes God's dealings with individuals; it does not recognize God's Presence in His believers, as a group or collectively.

### Relation Between *Pramanas* and Christian Theology

We should understand clearly the relation between the *Pramanas* and Christian Theology. They are, as it were, the scaffolding which is necessary to put up the structure of Christian doctrine. Without a scaffolding no building of any size can be built; the greater the building the more elaborate is the scaffolding. This illustration is, however, not quite adequate. It makes a complete distinction between the body of Christian doctrine and the methods by which it comes into being. When a building is complete the scaffolding is taken down but the edifice of the Christian religion is never finished and the scaffolding is never removed. Perhaps a more adequate way to conceive of the methods which God uses to impart His revelation to mankind is to regard them as the springs in the bed of a river. These springs never dry up; but water is continuously welling forth and the river flows along to irrigate the fields and to quench human thirst. God is revealing Himself all the time.

I have mentioned briefly the number, nature and order of the *Pramanas* which the Christian theologian in India should follow. I shall now proceed to deal more fully with two of them—*Pratyaksha* and *Shabda*.

### Pratyaksha or Perception

All through the ages there has been a deep yearning in the human heart for a vision of God. A Psalmist cries, 'As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God; when shall I come and appear before God?'<sup>1</sup> Another Psalmist says: 'As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.'<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Psalm xlii: 1, 2.

<sup>2</sup> Psalm xvii: 15.



There have been many saints in India who have been moved by a passionate longing for a vision of God. In his book entitled *A Sixteenth Century Indian Mystic*, Dr. W. G. Orr tells us about an interview which Dadu, a humble saint, had with Akbar, the great and powerful Moghul Emperor. There was a deep strain of religion in Akbar. When in the course of his tours he heard of Dadu, he expressed a desire to see him. Dadu was most unwilling to go to the Emperor, for he cared nothing for kings or royal favours. After much persuasion Akbar's courtiers prevailed upon Dadu to meet the Emperor. In the course of this interview Dadu quoted a Persian couplet:

'The soul filled with passionate yearning stands expectant at the door of vision.

The surrendered heart dwells every moment in the Divine Presence watchful, alert.'<sup>1</sup>

There was a long discussion between Akbar and Dadu about the ways in which the Presence of God becomes manifest to the soul. The Emperor pressed Dadu to visit him again and to discuss religion with him further. Dadu absolutely refused to see the Emperor again. He had a passionate devotion to God and for nothing else. The patronage of a powerful Emperor and the favours which he was prepared to lavish were as nothing to him.

Mr. P. Chenchiah, a devout and well-read Indian Christian layman, thus speaks of the vision of Christ and the *Pramanas* of the Christian theologian. 'Why did Jehovah who spoke to Moses and the Prophets and was a friend of Abraham cease to have any dealing with men directly? Is it because Jesus has come in His place? Why has Jesus ceased to have direct transaction with us? The Indian Christian question of direct experience cannot be answered by diatribes against Mysticism. The Indian Christian seeks a plain answer for a very unmystical question.

'Jesus did not die. He rose. He did not put off His body but ascended to Heaven with it. It cannot be said that He left the world for Heaven only to return at the second advent. He appeared to Paul. If He appeared to Paul, why not to you and me? Why do Churches and books intervene and bring Him to us like water from a distant fountain-head? Is it because nobody wants to meet Him and we are all satisfied with the Bible and the Church? Why should we believe and trust those (as Dr. Bouquet wants us) who have received it as in a flash from the mind of God Himself when we do not believe the mystic when he says that he received it in more than a flash?

'The Church mechanism assures us that direct knowledge of Jesus is not possible. The central importance given to Mass among Catholics and the equally central place given to the Bible among Protestants confirm the view. If there could be direct contact with Jesus, why should we seek it through bread and wine? If God speaks to us today why hear His words through a book written about twenty centuries ago?'<sup>2</sup> With considerable emphasis this writer urges that all our knowledge of God and Christ comes from our direct contact with them and

<sup>1</sup> W. G. Orr, *A Sixteenth Century Indian Mystic*, page 33.

<sup>2</sup> P. Chenchiah, *The Guardian*, Madras, February 13, 1947.



not from any other source. It is, therefore, essential that we should examine the place and value of God's Word in the Bible, which is claimed by theologians as the primary source of Christian Theology.

### Shabda or Testimony

When we read the Old Testament we find that the Prophets and Seers who wrote it say that God met them directly and spoke to them. 'Thus saith the Lord' is the constant refrain which runs through the Old Testament. God appeared to Moses in the burning bush and called him to lead his people out of their bondage in Egypt.<sup>1</sup> Isaiah saw the Lord of hosts sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, in the temple.<sup>2</sup> In these and many other instances given in the Old Testament we see clearly that God spoke directly to His Prophets and revealed Himself to them. There was absolutely no question in their minds as to whether God had met them. This experience came to them with over-powering intensity and they realized without a shadow of doubt that they had seen or heard God. The conviction that they had met God dawned on them with dramatic suddenness and influenced profoundly and powerfully the whole course of their life. As a result of what they had seen and heard in their direct contact with God they became changed men and made an entirely new start in life. Whether we consider the internal evidence contained in the records of their experience or the momentous consequences which flowed as a result of their experience, the conclusion is clear that their contact with God was utterly and truly real.

This revelation of God which came to them was quite unexpected. They had not striven for it; they had not made an effort to reach God; it was not in virtue of the strength or force of their penance (*Tapas*) or their contemplation (*Yoga*) that they had seen God. 'The word of the Lord came unto Jeremiah saying, "Before I formed thee in the belly, I knew thee and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations".'<sup>3</sup>

The revelation which had been granted to them by Divine Grace was not primarily for their benefit but for the benefit of others. They had to communicate this revelation to their people. This was not at all easy for them; they tried in all possible ways to evade their responsibility. Moses made many excuses—that he was unworthy to undertake this task, that his people would not believe him or hearken to his voice and that he was not eloquent but slow of speech. God did not accept any of these excuses but answered him that He would be with him and give him all help. Isaiah pleaded his sinfulness and cried that he was a man of unclean lips and dwelt in the midst of a people of unclean lips. His lips were touched with a live coal taken from off the altar in the temple, his iniquity was taken away and his sin purged. Likewise Jeremiah said, 'Oh Lord God! Behold, I cannot speak for I am a child. But the Lord said unto me, Say not I am a child, for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak. Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord.'<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Exodus iii.

<sup>2</sup> Isaiah vi.

<sup>3</sup> Jeremiah i: 5.

<sup>4</sup> Jeremiah i: 7, 8.



The self-disclosure of God to these Prophets had an external reference. It was not meant for their personal enjoyment. Self-authentication was not its primary motive. Their contact with God, intense and real and over-powering, had an outer purpose. Through them other men were to know God and His love and goodness. If 'thus saith the Lord' was a constant refrain in their prophecies, 'Thus shalt thou say to the children of Israel' was another constant refrain. The note of direct contact with God was linked with the call to make Him known to others. However difficult this task was and however unwilling the Prophets were to undertake it, the responsibility of communicating to others what they had heard and known directly from God was laid on them with a power and authority which they could not shake off. Whatever their own dreams or plans for their life had been, they had to surrender them in order that this vocation to which God had summoned them might be fulfilled. Thus it is clear that the real experience which these men had was to become a permanently enriching influence not merely in their own personal life but in the whole life of mankind. Their precious insight into the nature of God was for the benefit of all the nations of the world.

### Testimony of the Bible

If we believe that God speaks to us directly today and that what He says is of supreme importance, the Word of God in the Bible is a priceless treasure of undying value. We cannot afford to neglect it or to ignore it while we seek to respond to the good God who is ever willing to make His mind and heart accessible to the least among us, provided we approach Him in a spirit of humble and penitent love. It is an essential part of God's plan for mankind that His direct contact with the Prophets and Seers of the Old Testament should be for the healing of the nations. If we believe that God makes His presence felt among us today and that He is the Supreme Reality, we ought to recognize that His plan of revelation is binding and authoritative. We cannot call on Him for His guidance today and forget or ignore all that He has said in the past for guidance. The same God who speaks to us at present and whose fellowship we experience has made it clear that His encounter with the Prophets of the Old Testament is of undying significance for the whole of mankind and it is our duty to accept gladly and willingly this rich heritage which He has left for us in the Old Testament.

The revelation of God in the Old Testament reaches its climax in the Incarnation of Jesus Christ. All through the centuries the Hebrew people were prepared through their suffering and their struggles to receive the Lord Jesus Christ. When towards the end of His ministry Philip spoke to Jesus and said, 'Show us the Father', Jesus answered him, 'He that hath seen me hath seen the Father'.<sup>1</sup> Philip was giving expression to the age-long desire of the human race for a direct vision of God. Jesus did not rebuke Philip but pointed out that this desire would be fulfilled by *Pratyaksha* of Jesus. *Pratyaksha* literally means 'before the eyes'. What is seen with one's eyes gives us clear and definite knowledge without even the slightest tremor of a doubt. Some-

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<sup>1</sup> John xiv: 8, 9.



one tells us that he has heard from another person that the river is in flood. We are not at all sure of the accuracy of this information. If he says that he has seen the river in flood with his own eyes we are more ready to accept his word. If we see for ourselves the flood in the river we are absolutely sure of the fact. No one can shake that certainty because it is based on direct perception. No *Anumana* can give us the same assurance. When we see the surrounding country inundated with water, we may surmise that the river is in flood. But this knowledge cannot possess the certainty which belongs to direct perception. The deep-seated longing of the human soul for the vision of God felt by many devout men and women all over the world has met its fulfilment in the Incarnation of Jesus. He lived as one of us, passing through the human experiences of joy, of sorrow, of suffering and of love. He was hungry, thirsty and tired like any one of us. He had friends whom He loved with tender and lasting passion. There were the Pharisees and the Scribes whose life and teaching He could not accept and He said so plainly without mincing words. He died on the Cross enduring the utmost agony of body and soul and thus revealed once for all the depth of God's love for mankind. It was in this way that God came into direct contact with men.

Early in the history of the Church, Christian teachers who commanded respect and exercised authority and were even known as Prophets began to teach that the Incarnation was not real. They failed to convince the Church of the soundness of their belief and therefore had to secede. They set out to spread their false doctrine. Their teaching was acceptable to a large number of people, even more so than the orthodox doctrine. They became known as the Docetists. They held that the body of Jesus was not real but only a phantom. There were two main reasons which led them to this belief. They said that all matter was evil and that Jesus, the Divine Incarnation, could not have taken on a real human body. They also could not believe that God actually suffered. He was above all suffering; to say that He suffered was incompatible with His greatness.<sup>1</sup>

God did not reveal Himself only by a theophany such as is described in Exodus, Chapter xxxiii. It is not every one who sees a theophany. Men are endowed with various spiritual gifts. There are not many who are spiritually alert and sensitive enough to see a theophany. Further a theophany, however vivid, effective and self-authenticating, does not go far to reveal the goodness, justice and love of God. A theophany lasts but for a brief while. A mother's love is revealed through a long course of years by innumerable natural and spontaneous acts. Especially in times of crisis such as illness or misfortune, the mother's love is revealed. So is God's love revealed through a series of natural and spontaneous acts of love of the Incarnate Jesus, which reached their highest expression on the Cross.

The Incarnation, then, is the Christian answer to the human longing for a direct perception of God. True, the number of those who thus saw God in human form was quite limited. But the Gospels, written by those who came in direct contact with Him, have enshrined for all ages the Incarnate Jesus. Through these Gospels millions of men and women

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<sup>1</sup> C. H. Dodd, *The Johannine Epistles*, pages xviii and xix.



have come to know and love God and Christ. The purpose of the Incarnation is to make God real to men. God is no longer a remote Deity unknown and inaccessible. Archbishop William Temple has written beautifully on this point: 'As we read the story, though it all happened long ago, we apprehend present fact. It is not only the record of a historical episode that we read: it is the self-expression of that God "in whom we live and move and have our being", so that whatever finds expression there, is true now, and the living Jesus who is "the same yesterday and today and for ever" still deals with our souls as He dealt with those who had fellowship with Him when He tabernacled among us. Our reading of the Gospel story can be and should be an act of personal communion with the living Lord.'<sup>1</sup>

In saying that God's dealings with individuals and nations in the past as recorded in the Bible are of permanent significance for the religious life of mankind we are accepting a principle which prevails in every sphere of human thought and activity. The past is built into the present, whether in human experience or in civilization or in literature. The judgement of an old man is respected if he has garnered the wisdom which the years have taught him. All over the world when complicated problems arise and difficult situations have to be dealt with, the judgement of a man of considerable experience and ripe wisdom is sought. He has lived long; he has met many people; he is aware of numerous difficulties; and he knows how they have been solved. If he is a man of intelligence he would have learnt a great deal in the course of time. His varied contacts with different types of men would have instilled into him a spirit of caution. All these mean that the past is of immense value and sheds light on the present. As with individuals so with the human race. Every forward step which man takes is built up into the structure of human civilization. There can be no progress in science, education or culture if the past is forgotten and the achievements of our ancestors are not built upon. Every rung of the ladder of human progress we climb takes us up one step forward. All the achievements in modern science are the result of discoveries made by men of genius in the past which have been assimilated and have become a part and parcel of our modern life. When once the law of gravitation has been discovered it is not allowed to be forgotten. The great books of the human race are a permanent treasure. Civilizations may rise and fall, empires may flourish and decay, the fortunes of nations may change, but a precious book will never be allowed to perish. If a poet has enjoyed a sunrise and has described its glowing beauty in immortal verse it goes down the ages helping generation after generation of men to enjoy their sunrise better. We had in Calcutta a cultured Bengali friend who often called on us. One day he recited with deep feeling the description of a sunrise in Kalidasa's *Sakuntala*. This has been translated by Sir Monier Monier-Williams thus:—

'Oh the dawn has already broken.  
Lo! in one quarter of the sky, the Moon,  
Lord of the herbs and night-expanding flowers,  
Sinks towards his bed behind the western hills;

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<sup>1</sup> William Temple, *Readings in St. John's Gospel*, First Series, page 15.



While in the east, preceded by the Dawn,  
 His blushing charioteer, the glorious Sun  
 Begins his course, and far into the gloom  
 Casts the first radiance of his orient beams.  
 Hail! co-eternal orbs, that rise to set,  
 And set to rise again ; symbols divine  
 Of man's reverses, life's vicissitudes.  
 And now,  
 While the round Moon withdraws his looming disc  
 Beneath the western sky, the full-blown flower  
 Of the night-loving lotus sheds her leaves  
 In sorrow for his loss, bequeathing nought  
 But the sweet memory of her loveliness  
 To my bereaved sight ; e'en as the bride  
 Disconsolately mourns her absent lord,  
 And yields her heart a prey to anxious grief.<sup>1</sup>

This beautiful description of a sunrise has become a part of the literature of mankind. After we read it, we appreciate a sunrise far more because a great poet has enabled us to see beauty as we had not seen it before. His deep emotion, committed to writing, does not swamp our appreciation of a sunrise. It would be quite wrong of us merely to read beautiful descriptions of sunrise and not to see the sunrise itself. But we should certainly learn from the great poets to appreciate better a sunrise. Every valuable insight into the Divine Nature which God has given to man in the past, especially in the Bible, becomes an imperishable part of the spiritual heritage of man. We can no more afford to throw away the records of the past dealings of God with men than we can allow the works of Kalidasa or Shakespeare to be forgotten. The records of religion in the past in the Bible do not swamp our religion to-day ; they give it a depth and breadth which it otherwise might not possess.



God is not known so long as we believe what we are told about Him, nor even when we buttress this belief with reasons drawn from the wisdom of the ancient world. God is known only when He is met, and that is when He comes to meet us, whether it be in the assembly of His people, or in the reading or hearing of His Word, or in the midst of the storm where He appears and with His simple I AM casts out fear. The intuition of primitive man is not wholly astray, after all. In the tumult of the impersonal forces of nature and of history the personal presence of Christ is found. And Christian faith is simply the recognition of this encounter when it occurs. H. A. Hodges in *Reformation Old and New*.

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<sup>1</sup> *Sakuntala*, tr. by M. Monier-Williams, p. 83.



# Blasphemy

E. SAMBAYYA

As a religious term blasphemy means speech injurious to God and derogatory to His divine majesty. To blaspheme is to come short of the faith and reverence due to God by intentional and contemptuous speech. Though the term is common to Judaism, Christianity and Islam, it is doubtful whether it has the same force in Hinduism. From the Christian point of view, the *Vedanta* ideal of identity between the Absolute and the individual self is open to the charge of blasphemy. The enthusiastic language of some of the *Vedantists* like *Vivekananda* exposes the *Vedanta* ideal to such criticism. But it should be borne in mind that the *Vedantists* are not primarily thinking of ethical completeness but of an identity in Being, above the ethical level. Nevertheless, the identity conception for which the *Vedanta* is so famous is peculiarly disastrous to the claim of ethics in human life. Some of the frivolous episodes of the *Puranas* and the *Epics* expose popular Hinduism to the charge of blasphemy. But there are exceptions. In the *Gita*, *Arjuna* says to *Krishna*, 'If in my mirth I showed no reverence to thee while playing or resting, while sitting or eating, while alone, O eternal Lord, or in the presence of others, I implore thee who art infinite to pardon me.' (XI: 42.) Another instance is provided by the story of *Prahlada* whose father was slain for his blasphemous deeds and utterances against God. It is generally true that in the comprehensive system of Hinduism the sin of blasphemy is noticed wherever the personality and the majesty of the deity are stressed.

In Islam blasphemy occurs in connection with the doctrine of the unity of God (*Tauhid*). The excessive influence of this doctrine is such that the offence of associating a partner with God is considered an unpardonable sin (*Shirk*). 'Verily God will not forgive the union of other gods with Himself. But other than this will He forgive to whom He pleaseth. And he who uniteth gods with God hath devised great wickedness.' (Sura 4:51.) Thus the Trinitarian conception of God is blasphemous to Islam because Allah is He who has no partner (*la sharik*), and cannot share His glory with another. The blasphemy (*Shirk*) against God is defined to be of four kinds: viz. (1) that of ascribing knowledge to others than God (*Shirk'ul ilm*), i.e., to ascribe power to soothsayers; (2) that of ascribing powers to others than God (*Shirk'ul tasarrif*), i.e. to suppose that God so esteems the rank of any one as to pardon his sin on account of it; (3) that of offering worship to created things (*Shirk'ul ibadat*), i.e. prostration before any created being with the idea of worshipping it or 'associating in worship'; (4) that of performance of ceremonies which imply reliance on others than God (*Shirk'ul adat*), i.e. to swear by the name of the Prophet, of *Ali*, of the



*Imams*, or of *Pirs* is to give them honour due to God alone. It can therefore be readily seen that the dread sin of *Shirk* is rooted in the zeal for the unity of God, though the unity stressed is mathematical unity.

### Old Testament

What Islam failed to grasp adequately is declared clearly in the Old Testament where blasphemy is always a sin against the character of the One, Holy, Living God. In the Old Testament to blaspheme is to sin in word or deed in impious rebellion against God. It is a grievous sin opposed to praising or hallowing God's name. The book of Leviticus contains the grim story of a half-Israelite blasphemer who met his death by stoning, at the hands of the congregation of Israel. 'He that blasphemeth the name of the Lord shall surely be put to death.' (Lev. 24:16.) In Judaism as in Islam the use of the word 'blasphemy' is influenced by the Old Testament idea of God of which 'the Holy One of Israel' may be regarded as the best summary. The revealed character of God is such that it evokes response in man in the form of praise, and obedience to His will. The opposite of such response is defiant hostility to God in speech or action derogatory to His majesty and power. Among Israel the breaking of Sabbath, neglect of circumcision, and idolatry were considered blasphemous as they constituted acts of rebellion against Jehovah.

The specific nature of the commandment 'thou shalt have none other gods but me' puts idolatry, crude or subtle, into the category of blasphemy. Therefore we come very near to committing this gravest of sins when we seek to find our happiness in some created object, however good. All welfare schemes and plans which have not got as their ultimate aim the setting of man in his proper relationship to the living God come dangerously near to the setting up of idols in the midst of the people. As S. Ignatius Loyola says, 'Man was created to praise and worship and serve God. . . . And the other things on the face of the earth were created for man's sake, that they might help him in following out the end for which he was created. . . . Hence it follows that man should make use of creatures so far as they help him toward this end, and should withdraw or abstain from them in so far as they are a hindrance to that end.' (Spiritual Exercises.)

Therefore it follows that profession of loyalty to God on the one hand, and an idolatrous attitude to created things on the other is like going through life with a squint eye instead of a single eye.

Taking the name of God in vain, as in swearing and frivolous quoting of scripture is blasphemous because God's name should be invoked only for adoration and prayer. We are bidden to hallow God's name and ascribe honour to Him. A frivolous attitude to God which is rooted in the contempt of the deity is the very negation of religious belief. It is impossible for a servant of God to tolerate among his fellows either swearing, or frivolous talk about God.

### New Testament

In the New Testament we find a certain application of the Old Testament ideas of blasphemy to the conduct of our Lord. Jesus was



condemned by contemporary Judaism as a blasphemer and handed over to the Roman authorities for execution. While healing the paralytic Jesus declared that his sins were forgiven. His words, 'My son, thy sins are forgiven' were interpreted as blasphemy, for in ascribing to Himself the prerogative which belonged to God alone Jesus made Himself equal with God. Again, the Gospel tradition is unanimous that Jesus was in the habit of breaking Sabbath and that the Jews considered it blasphemous. In the discourse attached to the healing of the cripple at the pool of Bethesda, S. John explains the implications of Jesus' customary violation of the Sabbath law. Jesus defends His action by referring to the analogy of the father-son relationship. The implication of His saying, 'My father worketh even until now, and I work' seems to be that since Jesus is the Son of God, His work is the work of God Himself. The Jews recognized the vastness of the claim which lay behind the saying, and judge it to be blasphemy which it is their duty to punish with death. Later, when another attempt was made to stone Him, He interrupts them by making an appeal to His works of mercy. 'For which of these works' He says, 'do you stone me?' They perceive that these works were not isolated acts of charity but proceed from a claim which they regard as blasphemous. Finally, during His trial Jesus tacitly admits that He is soon to be elevated to the right hand of God. The claim of Jesus to be the Messiah in this sense, i.e. to be seated on the right hand of God was blasphemous. Hence the High Priest declares Him to be worthy of death. So Augustine observes that the Jews detected in the strange utterances of Jesus a clear claim to deity which the Arians for all their intellectual acumen failed to grasp. They understood Jesus as teaching a dangerous form of idolatry which was blasphemous. Similarly S. Stephen suffers the death penalty for the utterance, 'I see the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God'.

### Sin against the Holy Ghost

Of the various forms of blasphemy the most serious, and the one which concerns us seriously is the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. This unforgivable sin is mentioned in the New Testament in connection with the Beelzebub controversy. 'Verily I say unto you, all their sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men and their blasphemies wherewith so ever they shall blaspheme: but whosoever shall blaspheme against the Holy Spirit hath never forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin: because they said he hath an unclean spirit.' (Mark 3: 28-30.) The Marcan form of this saying is valuable for the illuminating note of explanation at the end, 'because they said he hath an unclean spirit'. At His baptism Jesus was anointed with the Holy Spirit; and in the power of the Spirit He proclaimed the arrival of the rule of God among men. The miracles of healing which He performed were characterized by a unique moral quality in that they set men free from the power of the evil. These and other miracles were the expression of the working of the Holy Spirit through Him. They were the signs of the arrival of the Messianic era. The Scribes and the Pharisees had seen the healing power of God blaze in their eyes like the sun; they looked it full in the face and said it was the spirit of the devil. The maligning of the Son of Man in this way may be due to defective understanding of Him in His

humiliation with the mists of flesh about Him. Blasphemous utterances such as 'He is a glutton and winebibber' may be pardonable as caused by ignorance. But not so with the charge that the power behind the acts of healing was the devil. The charge that Jesus had Beelzebub was directed against the Spirit of God who pervaded and controlled the person of Jesus Christ. It was not a case of defective understanding but a deliberate defiance of God. In that the Pharisees and the Scribes ascribed to the devil what was manifestly the work of God's Holy Spirit, it was a wilful blaspheming of the good and Holy Spirit of God.

To us who hold firmly to the doctrine of the universality of the forgiveness of sins this saying of our Lord presents two difficulties: (1) 'hath never forgiveness'; and (2) 'but is guilty of an eternal sin'. The words 'hath never forgiveness' are not easy to reconcile with the revealed character of our Lord. Forgiveness which means the setting aside of every obstacle to fellowship requires the simultaneous and costly action of the two parties concerned in order that it may become operative. The injured party must put away the wrong done to him and treat the other person as if he had never wronged. Similarly, the offender on his part must through contrition and godly sorrow readily accept the gift of forgiveness. A readiness to own the sin, true contrition, and a firm resolve to turn away from it, constitute the proper conditions for appropriating forgiveness. How can all this be accomplished in the sinner unless God the Holy Spirit moves him inwardly, teaching his conscience, and gaining control over his will? As we are endowed with free-will it is possible for us in the wilfulness of our perverted nature to reject the whole testimony of the Holy Spirit, and hold that the truth to which He points is untruth. Freedom of will implies unlimited freedom to commit sin and to remain in the sinful state. The very concept of freedom involves the possibility of its misuse. The stubborn, conscious unwillingness to fulfil the conditions of pardon can put one in a state where forgiveness is not possible.

In the expression 'but is guilty of an eternal sin', the term 'eternal sin' is not easy to understand. Eternal sin is not that which lasts for ever, but rather a sin which has in it a living power of evil, the bounds of which cannot be determined. The quality of eternity is not so much in its everlastingness but in its apartness from time. The concept of eternal sin may be made clear by comparison with eternal life. Eternal life may be described as a life of the Sabbath rest of God, beyond the reach of the power of temptation, and in joyous fellowship with God. Eternal sin denotes the possibility of misusing our human freedom by refusing to respond to the workings of the Holy Spirit in our soul, and thus hardening our hearts and wills to His entreaties. The evil possibilities of such a state of existence are endless. We may go so far in sinning that we become insensitive to the salvation provided by the Incarnation. 'It is the worst and most deadly of all sins because it is the rejection of God's purpose and denial of His nature; it is the betrayal of the cause of humanity, and is spiritual suicide.'<sup>1</sup>

Thus blasphemy is the greatest sin because it is the climax of unbelief. It contains the weight of unbelief as well as the perversion of will. In Moral Theology it is listed as a mortal

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<sup>1</sup> T. W. Manson, *The Teaching of Jesus*.



sin; and is not unrelated to what S. John calls 'a sin unto death'. (1 John 5: 16, 17.) Here we cannot say for certain whether S. John is referring to certain specific acts of sin or to a habitual state of mind which is characterized by sin. Every act of sin *may* lead to spiritual death just as every case of sickness *may* end fatally. But sin unto death is not *an act* of sin however heinous, but *a state* or habit of sin wilfully chosen and persisted in. It is constant and deliberate opposition to God. In so far as it springs from a heart which wilfully and contemptuously rejects the testimony of the Holy Ghost it may be identified with the sin against the Holy Ghost. The 'sin unto death' contains the suggestion that it looks in the direction of death and finally results in the death of the soul.

### The Teaching of Moral Theologians

What makes the sin against the Holy Ghost a mortal sin according to the Moral Theologians? The early Fathers including Athanasius, Ambrose and Chrysostom say that sin against the Holy Ghost is literally to utter blasphemy against the third person of the Trinity. But they do not say why it is an unforgivable sin. The view of S. Augustine meets this objection. He holds that blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is final impenitence, i.e., when a man perseveres in mortal sin until death, we say that he has sinned against the Holy Ghost. In such circumstances sinfulness pervades the whole of man's conscious and unconscious life vitiating his reason and will till death overtakes him. Thus the man does not give himself a chance to be forgiven. It is further argued that goodness is appropriated to the Holy Ghost as power is appropriated to the Father, and wisdom to the Son. Hence when a man sins through the weakness of the flesh he is said to sin against the Father; and when he sins in ignorance he is said to sin against the Son; and when he sins through malice, i.e., by choosing evil and saying 'evil be thou my good' he is said to sin against the Holy Ghost. But this seems to introduce artificial distinctions into acts of sin. Therefore it is perhaps more helpful to think of the Holy Spirit as the love of the Father and of the Son, and through whom forgiveness is effected. By continued impenitence we deprive ourselves of the means of forgiveness afforded by the Holy Spirit.

The teaching of S. Thomas Aquinas is but a slight adaptation of, and yet a great improvement on the view of S. Augustine. The sin against the Holy Ghost according to him is not merely continued impenitence but that persistence in sin which arises from a refusal to make use of the divine aid of grace. Such contemptuous ignoring of the succour of the Holy Ghost against temptation and sin is blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. It is due to our failure to invoke and call to our aid the almighty Father that we succumb to the sins of the weakness of our mortal nature. Since the Son is the eternal Wisdom, sins committed in ignorance are looked upon as sins against the Son, e.g., calling Jesus a glutton and winebibber. But deliberate and persistent continuance in sin is the sin against the Holy Ghost, for the Spirit is goodness and sanctification.

### The Work of the Holy Spirit

God the Holy Spirit is constantly sowing the seeds of holiness in us. In our struggle against sin and temptation the Holy Spirit comes to our

aid by instilling in us the spirit of holy fear. By virtue of this divine aid we recognize the infinite claims of God upon our obedience, and worship. We are restrained from sin by the thought of the holiness of God and His sure judgements. But when we refuse to take note of the divine judgement we deprive ourselves of the assistance of the Holy Spirit in this form. This is presumption and contempt of the action of the Holy Spirit in the soul as the teacher of godly fear and reverence. In the opposite direction, the Holy Spirit assists us by delivering us from despair which follows from failure in moral and spiritual life. He does this by making us aware of the mercy of God and His readiness to forgive. But when we ignore or disbelieve the promises of God declared in the scriptures and allow ourselves to fall into despair we sin against the Holy Spirit.

The spirit of knowledge is another form by which the Holy Spirit aids us. He teaches our soul that man is created in the image, and for the glory, of God. When this abiding truth of religion is accepted, it acts as a deterrent against our mortgaging of our life to sin. But many of us either reject or bypass this truth concerning ourselves. Some of us therefore wilfully choose to remain unbelievers. This deliberate infidelity is blasphemy against the Holy Ghost who is Himself the Spirit of knowledge and true godliness.

The Holy Spirit works in us as the Spirit of wisdom and understanding. He gently points to us what hurt sin causes to the loving nature of God, and what lawlessness it produces in our own lives. The ministry of the Spirit is calculated to rouse us to penitence on the one hand, and restrain us from new acts of sin, on the other. But obstinate determination not to think or do anything which might lead to a change of mind and heart and a longing for forgiveness, is to blaspheme the Holy Spirit. Thus the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit may take the form of presumption, or despair, or unbelief, or irreligion, or obstinacy.

Finally, why is the sin against the Holy Ghost not forgiven? Mainly because it is unforgivable. It is unforgivable in respect of the punishment it deserves, and the guilt it involves. With regard to the former it may be said that there is no excuse for such sin. It is sin par excellence committed haughtily. With regard to the latter, blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is unforgivable much in the same way as a disease is incurable, when for instance, it has so debilitated the patient as to create a revulsion to any eating or drinking, including medicine. Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit consists in the refusal of the very aids of the Holy Ghost by which forgiveness is made possible. One arrives at this alarming state of spiritual life as a result of repeated acts of violence against the Holy Spirit. We grieve the Holy Spirit by broken pledges of loyalty. The next stage is that we resist the ministrations of the Spirit in our soul by our wilful choice of something evil; and finally we quench the Spirit by final impenitence. The suffrages of the Litany, and the *precés* enshrined in the Morning and Evening Prayer of the Church constantly warn us about this danger.

O God, make clean our hearts within us ;  
And take not thy Holy Spirit from us.



# Mohammed's Misconception of the Trinity

K. D. W. ANAND

A student of comparative religion makes this striking remark regarding false religions : 'Of all the systems of belief which have had a widespread hold on mankind this may be posited, that they are commonly true in what they affirm, false in what they deny. The error in every theory is essentially found in its denials, that is its limitations. What it sees is substantial and real, what it does not see is a mark only of limited vision.'<sup>1</sup>

In the case of Islam, its denial of the Holy Trinity can be attributed to limited vision. It is not easy to say whether Mohammed himself is to be blamed for it or whether it was entirely due to the misrepresentation of the doctrine by the Christians with whom he came in contact. The fact, however, remains that the heretical ideas about the Trinity expressed by Mohammed were not the concoctions of a prejudiced mind, but rather the clever gleanings of a genius who was able to make capital of whatever distorted ideas he could collect to assert the superiority of Muslim claims.

## The Ideas of the Christian Church of Mohammed's Time

It is not our purpose in this essay to show to what extent Mohammed had the opportunity to know the true Christian conception regarding the Trinity, for a good deal has been said on this rather debatable question ; our concern here is to find out to what extent the divided Church of Mohammed's time was responsible for the ideas he used in making his denial of this doctrine.

The most important passages in the Qur'an that have a direct reference to the Trinity occur in Surahs four and five composed by Mohammed towards the end of his career in Madina. Surah 4: 167-170 reads: 'O, ye people of the Book, overstep not the bounds in your religion, and of God speak only the truth. The Messiah, Jesus the Son of Mary, is only an apostle of God, and His Word which He conveyed into Mary and a Spirit proceeding from Himself. Believe therefore in God and his apostles, say not, Three. Forbear—it will be better for you. God is only one God! Far be it from His Glory that He should have a son!' Again Surah 5: 77 says: 'They surely are infidels who say, "God is the third of three" for there is no God but one God: and if they

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<sup>1</sup> J. F. Clarke, *Ten Great Religions*, Vol. II, p. 62.

refrain not from what they say, a grievous chastisement shall light on such of them as are infidels.' The third passage in the same Surah is a favourite proof-text used by the Muslims against Christians—'And when God shall say, "O Jesus, Son of Mary: hast thou said unto mankind—'Take me and my mother as two Gods, beside God?''" He shall say—"Glory be unto Thee! it is not for me to say that which I know to be not the truth; had I said that, verily Thou wouldest have known it: Thou knowest what is in me, but I know not what is in Thee; for Thou well knowest things unseen!"' Surah 5: 116.

There are three grave errors in the idea of the Trinity represented by these passages. In the first place, the Trinity is regarded as a Triad, for according to the commentator Zamakhshari, Surah 4: 164, quoted above clearly indicates the view 'that God, Christ, and Mary are three Gods, and that Christ is a child (*wald*) of God from Mary.' Secondly, Mary is included as one of the Persons of the Trinity. Thirdly, there is no mention of the Holy Spirit in the Trinity.

From the Quranic quotations regarding the Trinity, it is obvious that Mohammed blames the Christians for holding the views he condemned, and this is the seriousness of the issue. Mohammed is able to get away with a false interpretation of a doctrine which 'is not only fundamental but essential to the very existence of Christianity'. Who were these Christians and how did Mohammed come in contact with them?

In order to trace the heretical influence on Mohammed we must turn to the Church history of Mohammed's time. We find that throughout the fifth and sixth centuries, the Church was faced with severe doctrinal disputes centring round the Persons of the Trinity. The heretical ideas that assumed dangerous proportions at the time were those of the Monophysites, the Nestorians, and a section of the Orthodox Catholic Church which laid undue stress on the veneration of the Virgin Mary. The supporters of these heresies were condemned by the Great Councils, and as circumstances would have it, their leaders found refuge in the countries that were in the neighbourhood of Arabia. By the beginning of the seventh century there were churches within the borders of Arabia founded by these fugitives who crossed over into that country. Mohammed no doubt came in contact with these Christians both within the borders of his own country as well as outside during his commercial travels.

We may briefly look at some of the ideas these persecuted Christians represented. They were most loyal to their convictions, and were not slow to pass on their precious doctrines to others.

The Monophysites were those who recognized only one nature in our Lord, one hypostasis which expressed both the human and divine elements. Their tendency, however, was to emphasize His divinity at the expense of His humanity. Herein lay the evil of the heresy with reference to Mohammed.

The Nestorians believed that in Christ there were not only two natures but two persons of which the one was Divine, even the Eternal Word and the other which was human was the man Jesus; 'that the union between the Son of God and the Son of Man was formed at the moment of the Virgin's conception, and was never to be dissolved'; that it was not a union of nature or person, but only of will and affection, that Christ



was to be carefully distinguished from God, who only dwelt in Him as in His temple.

Both these heresies though very different from each other, gave the impression to Mohammed that the Christians were setting up another God beside Allah. He could not understand the orthodox Christian position regarding Jesus that He Himself was God, Who became man; and so he feels justified in warning the Christians in these words: 'O ye people of the Book, overstep not the bounds in your religion, and of God speak only the truth.' (Surah 4: 167); 'Verily, the likeness of Jesus with God is as the likeness of Adam. He created him from the earth, then He said to him, Be and he was.' (Surah 3: 51); 'Infidels now are they who say, 'Verily, God is the Messiah Ibn Maryam (son of Mary)! Say: And who could aught obtain from God, if He chose to destroy the Messiah Ibn Maryam, and his mother, and all who are on the earth together.' (Surah 5:19.)

### **The Heresy Concerning the Virgin Mary**

Extraordinary veneration was accorded to the Virgin Mary in Abyssinia, Syria and certain parts of Arabia. Prayers were offered in her name, her image was worshipped and she was regarded as a 'goddess and consort of the Diety'. She was addressed by such names as 'Queen of Heaven' and 'Mother of God'. It was no wonder that Mohammed included her in the Trinity.

Besides these worshippers of Mary, it appears that Mohammed had access to certain apocryphal Gospels such as 'The Nativity of Mary', 'The Protevangelium of the James the Lesser', and the Arabic 'Gospel of the Infancy', which distinctly encouraged false ideas and practices regarding the Virgin Mary. There are several passages in the Qur'an that bear close resemblance to the accounts of such Gospels.

Mohammed failed to include the Holy Spirit in the Trinity because none of these heretical sects presented adequate views regarding the Holy Spirit. He could therefore go no further in his conception of the Holy Spirit than the Jews whom he met in Madina and who regarded the Holy Spirit as the medium of inspiration. The only distinction he could make from the Jewish conception was to confuse the Angel Gabriel with the Holy Spirit, as it was Gabriel who was the appointed medium of the revelations he himself received from Allah.

Mohammed no doubt never heard the true explanation of the Trinity in Unity. Even the learned deputation to him headed by a bishop of the 'Emperor's Faith', that is, of the orthodox Catholic Church, failed to present the true conception of the Trinity, for Ibn Ishaq tells us of these ambassadors, that 'Like all the Christians they said, "Jesus is God, the Son of God, and the third of three". . .—They proved that He is the third of the three, namely God, Christ, and Mary.'

We may therefore say, that the tragedy of Islam lies not so much in the fanatical adherence of Mohammed to the rigid unity of Allah, but in the fact that the Church in Mohammed's time failed to represent the true nature of the Triune God. Mohammed was a sincere seeker of truth in the early years of his career. If he had met genuine Christianity in the early formative stage of his religious outlook, the history of Arabia might have been different.

# Worship as a Dramatic Experience

## Considerations for the non-liturgical Churches

HAROLD A. EHRENSPERGER

Dramatically effective worship succeeds in lifting the worshipper out of himself and in bringing him into the spirit or presence of something higher than himself. This may be from a source within himself or from something he feels outside himself. True worship establishes a relationship with this presence or spirit. The enduring quality of the relationship and the intensity of the reality are tests of the validity of the experience. In this sense, then, true worship is the recognition, identification and relationship to the noblest, the highest and the best that one can conceive. It is a coming into the presence of God and remaining there.

Worship is this relationship in process. The effectiveness of worship can always be judged by the way in which the self is prepared for the experiences of this relationship to the highest and noblest and by the resultant effect on the self. It is, therefore, a 'two-way' experience. It is the soul or spirit of the individual going out to a higher spirit, the opening up of the avenues of approach and, at the same time, the coming in of the influence of the greater spirit. Like all experiences, it is at first self-conscious. The more one comes into the practice of it, the more certain does the experiment become natural and spontaneous. It is always possible to have the experience of worship immediately and without even the consciousness of an attempt. When this happens, it is one of the supreme experiences of life—a moment in eternity when the physical self is broken through and enjoys a spiritual existence. As man succeeds in discovering this spirit world, as surely he must in his progress toward higher levels of living, the union and relationship with the supreme spirit will become the truly noble and energizing experience of his life. It will, of course, colour every other experience and grow to be a more continuous process in his every activity of life.

The technique of practising the presence of God demonstrated by the medieval monk, Brother Lawrence, is in a very real way perfection of the technique of practising worship. Worship is an extraordinary thing or an unusual experience only because it is not continuous. In the progress of spiritual life, it should become more continuous so that all life becomes a worshipping experience.

On the other hand, the very complexity of living, the distractions of the materialistic world and the 'busyness' of life are all characteristics that make the true experience of worship all the more unique.



This does not mean that worship should be an escape or that it is a running away from day-by-day experiences. On the contrary, it should be the means whereby these ordinary experiences are given meaning and are elevated to the distinction all life should have. The necessity to 'be still and know' is a prerequisite to strength, poise and inward peace. As one prepares himself and comes into the relationship with the spirit of life, he is participating in the preparation for and experience of worship. When the union between the spirit of man and the spirit of God becomes one, true worship takes place.

### **The Meaning of Dramatic**

The dramatic is always the genuine because it arises from within and expresses itself in the truly sincere. It is always an experience from the inward outward. It must be differentiated from the theatrical which is more likely to be a surface experience originating through something that one has 'put on' from the outside. The theatre always uses characteristic trappings, depends upon settings and lighting to gain a mood and atmosphere. It puts these on like a cloak and to gain its ends, uses the broad effects, often the obvious and the impressive. It strives for immediacy in reaction and it will use any method possible to become effective in communication. It is, therefore, oftentimes artificial and at best a surface technique.

The dramatic, on the other hand, by its very nature is more fundamental. It is the expression of depth feeling. Its expression reveals its origin. Dramatic speech is characterized by its sincerity, by its depth of feeling and its meaningful expression. Theatrical expression in contrast is likely to be bombastic and flamboyant. To test the dramatic quality of speech one must evaluate the sincerity of its origin as well as its effect. Like produces like. The theatrical, therefore, will probably cause superficial reactions. The dramatic should cause depth reactions. Deep calls to deep.

The end of worship is so much a depth experience—in fact, it should be the deepest experience of life—that it should always be dramatic. *All effective worship is dramatic.* It arises out of deep feeling of relationship and it succeeds because it establishes that relationship.

### **The Leader of Worship**

The leader of worship, therefore, occupies the important place of transmitter. To bring the individual worshipper into the experience of worship needs a transmitter who is also a worshipper. Unless the leader of worship himself is having the experience of worship, there can be little hope for a worship experience on the part of an individual who seeks this experience. He must, therefore, feel genuinely everything he does. He transmits through the experience of his own feeling. He is not playing a rôle, he is not assuming a position. He is worshipping. He is part of a total process. Until this happens there can be little chance for a genuine worship experience.

This means, therefore, that in group worship the worship leader must prepare himself for the worship period as surely as the worshipper in the group is prepared. Dramatic group worship can be effective only when the group itself is prepared for the experience and is helping in the parti-

cipation. This same principle applies to all those participating in the worship, the assistants, the choir, the organist and those in charge of seating or administering any part of the service. The entire personnel in leadership as well as those in the congregation must be in a unified worship atmosphere. The distractions caused by interruptions through insensitive worshippers can destroy the dramatic effectiveness of worship.

This is particularly true because dramatic worship is always unified worship which begins with the entrance into a receptive attitude and continues as the worshipper is raised to that point of unity and relationship with God which is the end of dramatic worship. It continues until the experience is completed. The object of worship should be the creation of an experience that can be carried out and continued after the group is disbanded. The more one becomes experienced in worship, the more fully he will be learning the ways in which the experience is continued.

Dramatic unity is always achieved by recognizing a beginning, a rising action, a climax and an end. These are not artificial markings. They are essential elements in the structure of a worship service. For this reason the place of worship, the establishment of the atmosphere and mood, the call to worship, the participation leading up to the climax of the moment of emotional and intellectual unity in the spirit, and the holding of that until it is established and becomes reality—all are component parts of the total dramatic worship experience.

### Ways to Dramatic Effectiveness

The setting of a worship service can be either dramatic or theatrical. If it is theatrical, there will be trappings that will call attention to themselves. A dramatic setting never calls attention to itself. It always becomes part of a total picture. This means that when lighting, costuming, setting and any other atmospheric conditions calling attention to themselves obtrude so that they distract from the purpose which is to lead the inner spirit of man to unity with the spirit of the universe, then the dramatic element is lost and the service ends in a theatrically impressive but superficial experience. Anything new may often be considered theatrical. It must be introduced with explanation and through an educational process. If it startles it may succeed in being impressive but only superficially so. Changes in an accustomed service are often-times so distracting that they negate any chance for betterment. This does not mean that worship needs to be stereotyped or that changes cannot be made. The way in which they are made is important. Worshippers must be prepared for changes or worship is likely to be theatrically exciting but not dramatically effective.

Dramatic unity which has the structure of a beginning, rising action and a climatic ending, is not an artificial structure. The tone and intensity of worship should obviously not be the same at the beginning as they are at the climax. There should be rising action or intensifying feeling as the service progresses. The worshipper comes into the atmosphere and experience from myriad distracting experiences. Each person coming into group worship is coming from a different kind of distraction. In the theatre the lowering of the lights, the magic moment before the curtain rises when the audience is stilled, the use of music and the



device of a curtain are all means to galvanize a group into a whole and to prepare it for a unified dramatic experience. The church has no such opportunities. Yet it must use lights and setting and create moods even more effectively than does the theatre.

The theatre recognizes the distractions from which the audience comes. The church must also recognize this same problem. It should not ask people to come immediately from a distracting world into the sudden experience of worship. For that reason if the congregation can be brought into a service sufficiently early so that they are present at the beginning, the auditorium should not of necessity be dimly lighted nor all of the setting of worship completely established. If a congregation is friendly and chatty, it is much better to introduce worship gradually. This can be done by means of lights or by the use of music or by the preparation of the altar or worship setting which will be the visual objects on which the worshipper will concentrate. The ritualistic churches do this by lighting candles, etc., *after* the congregation has assembled. If there is a worship setting, the worship leader as well as the congregation should be facing it. Nothing is more absurd than the average Protestant procedure of introducing a worship setting and then having the minister or worship leader sit with his back to that setting. It should be the focal point to hold the attention of the congregation so that there is no distraction. Dramatic worship appeals to all the senses, for it is a complete experience. It appeals, therefore, to the sight and to the hearing. In certain churches the atmosphere is equally important, and the purification by holy water and by incense is not accidental. The non-ritualistic church must find an equivalent for these features. A church that is stuffy or poorly ventilated can offer a real detriment to a genuine or dramatic worship experience.

### Dramatic Unity

Dramatic unity in a service is related directly to the movement of the service. Once the mood has been established and the service has begun, there should be a continuous development. The intensity may be relaxed at moments in the service, but the unity should never be lost. The qualities that will hold attention, direct thought and supply the feeling of spiritual relationship must be arranged in logical progression.

The preparation of a group for worship has been grossly neglected in the non-Roman church. The preparation of the setting of worship, the establishment of a mood and the call to worship are fundamentally important if the dramatic values are to be initiated. From distractions and noise to quiet concentration is the aim of the beginning of the service. For the service begins whenever the congregation is directed toward a setting, and attention is concentrated on the purpose of the participation. The call to worship should be truly a call to worship. This does not mean a few mouthed lines that have little or no meaning to the congregation. It does not mean a superficial call. The call is dramatic only when it is genuine, when it pulls people out of their distractions and reminds them of the purpose for their being present. Here as much as any place in the service creative ability needs to be introduced. A good call to worship that has become established in a church can help enormously to bring about an effective total experience.

A dramatic service will rely on experiences that are familiar to a congregation as well as those that are new. A familiar call to worship and familiar hymns have genuine value and place, just as certain litanies, creeds and prayers have significant contributions to make. The introduction of new material can have appropriate significance because of the meaning of the day or of the time or purpose of the worship. Obviously, this is best illustrated in the use of the materials for Christmas, for the celebration of various days in the Church calendar or for the particular needs of the congregation.

### Dramatic Prayer

Dramatic unity is accomplished also by the maintaining of a mood and a spirit. The offering can be as dramatically effective as the reading of the scriptures and the prayer provided it is thought through in terms of the mood of worship and of its place in the service. How it is introduced and carried out is, of course, of great importance. The repetition of prayers and the use of litany familiar to a congregation are not dramatically effective simply because they are well known or are repeated often. Their effectiveness will depend on the *way* they are repeated. Perhaps nothing in a service needs more rethinking in terms of its dramatic value than does the credal recitation or the congregational prayer such as the Lord's Prayer. Unless dramatic effect can be brought into the speaking of the Lord's Prayer, it is likely to be completely meaningless. Dramatic effectiveness is lost by speed. If the Lord's Prayer is spoken rapidly there is likely to be little opportunity for reflection on the meaning of its words so that it is almost certain to seem unimportant. In a prayer every phrase should be fraught with meaning, considered seriously, and not be ruined by meaningless repetition. To speak the Lord's Prayer dramatically means that each phrase of it is considered seriously and with genuine understanding. Sermons built upon various phrases of the Lord's prayer will, of course, heighten its meaning and will serve to promote the educational process that should be continuously going on in the church. The repetition of the Lord's Prayer should be one of the high moments in a service of worship. That it is usually meaningless at the present time is a commentary on the quality of dramatic worship.

A creed for the present-day Protestant Christian is equally perplexing. Yet the building of a creed is certainly a profoundly religious experience. It should also be an educational experience. Once it is arrived at or accepted from older creeds, it should be thought through carefully. It may be constantly open to revision in its wording so that it can be continuously fresh and relevant. Again, the speaking of it, if it is to be said, is extremely important. Both in the Lord's Prayer and a credal statement, as well as in litanies, it may oftentimes be necessary for the worship leader to speak the lines, allowing pauses in which the congregation can absorb the meaning. The fact that a person says a word does not mean that he participates. It might be better for the worship leader to speak the Lord's Prayer directly with genuine feeling, letting the congregation participate silently than it would be for the congregation to repeat the prayer without meaning in the glib way in which it is so often done.



A prayer can be theatrical or it can be dramatic. If it is a lot of words spoken to gain effect or to flatter the capacity of the leader to coin nice phrases, it is of little value. The dramatically effective congregational prayer is one that is spoken out of the needs of the people and it is said with sincerity and felicity in phrasing that comes out of the understanding of the reading of prayers that have been spoken by effective pray-ers. The success of the pulpit prayer is measured by the praying congregation. When the congregation prays with the minister the prayer is successful and it is dramatically effective.

Inherent in a dramatic experience is the sharing process. A play that is dramatically effective becomes one in which the audience gives itself to the subject of the play, becomes one with it and participates actively in the conflict through the crisis. It is always a shared experience. If it is genuine, it remains as an experience both for the player and the audience. To become one with kings, to walk with great saints, to struggle with problems is the privilege of an audience that shares a dramatically effective experience in the theatre.

The same process must of necessity take place in the church in group worship. Unless the worship group becomes one with the participants in the leadership of the worship, and unless there is a total shared experience, there is likely to be little dramatic effectiveness. Each person out of the mood and each person who does not succeed in becoming one with the total experience is a distraction no matter whether that person is the leader himself, or the person sitting in the pew.

### Music in Worship

Music is not an adjunct to worship—it is a means through which one worships. The so-called mood music at the beginning of the service like music in other parts of the service should not be the occasion for the display of pyrotechnics. It should be something that is played out of genuine feeling of appreciation. That it should be good music goes without saying and that it need not be lugubrious or funereal is of course obvious. Like the worship leader, the organist must be a worshipping participant. He must feel the mood, enter into the experience and have the privilege of helping direct it. For this reason, therefore, the music that bridges and ties together the various parts of the service, forming almost a continuous structure, may be the foundation unifying all the service. Growing out of it but never separate from it should come the spoken as well as the silent meditative parts of the service. There is no place for prima donnas either in the pulpit or in the choir. Special numbers are a tragic holdover from the concert hall and are likely to be distractions rather than contributions to a total worship experience. A solo can be expertly and technically effective and at the same time be a genuine part of the worship provided the artist is a part of the experience himself. The choir as well as the soloists must be worshipping participants. When a soloist stands out from the group and when he centres attention upon himself and the worshipper is distracted from the setting to the individual, the dramatic unity of the service is likely to be jeopardized. The organist, the choir leader and the choir as well as the worship leader, who may be the minister or his associates, all play a

part in the total dramatic unity. One is as important as the other if there is to be an organic whole.

Group singing can be dramatic or theatrical, or it can be merely meaningless activity. If it is singing that arises from the true spirit of worship and gives utterance to thanksgiving or to petition or to an affirmation of faith, it can be an integral part of the service and heighten the worship to give effectiveness to the whole experience.

All of these aspects of dramatic worship must be made important to the congregation through the educational process, through classes in worship, through instruction in the church school and through practice in the main worship service. The main service, however, is not the place for innovations and experiments before these innovations and experiments have been tested. The young people's meeting, the church school, family nights and worship interest groups are the places where experimentation should take place. When a technique has been perfected to the place where it is related to and becomes a part of the unity of the service, then it can be brought into the main worship service of the church.

### Dramatic Leadership

Obviously the success of any service will depend upon the persons who lead the service—the minister and his associates, the choir, the director, the soloists, the ushers and any others who participate in the activities of the service. Unless there is a common understanding and purpose in this leadership group there is little hope for dramatic effectiveness. This unity can be brought about through conferences, through discussions and through the give and take that must of necessity be brought into the picture if there is to be a real attempt made to worship.

The worship leader, more often than not the minister or his associates, is the pivotal person. If he does not have a sense of the dramatic, if he has no real depth experience and does not understand worship, there can be little hope that the whole service will in any way be dramatically effective. If he leads in prayer it must be because he is praying. If he reads a scripture effectively it must be because he understands the scripture, because he has read it and reread it, and because it has meaning for him which he wishes to translate to the congregation. *If the spirit does not come alive in him, it will not come alive in the congregation.*

This all applies with equal importance to the sermon. It can either be an exhibition, a theatrical stunt, a dull academic recitation, or it can be depth thinking arising out of depth living spoken in terms of present-day life and experience measured by the witness of Jesus and the revelation of God. If it is to be the word become flesh, it must arise out of needs and must in a very genuine sense be deep speaking unto deep. If the sermon is this kind of exchange of experience, and is a real exposition of insight gained through consecration and study, it is certain to be a part of the dramatic unity of the total worship service. The way it is spoken will either be distracting, theatrically annoying, or will evidence sincerity in its dramatic effectiveness. The Protestant pulpit has too often been the place for bombast, for ineffective speaking,



for poor public speaking. Until the preacher is trained in speaking there is equally little chance for dramatic worship.

### Dramatic Timing

If a play in the theatre is to carry over into life experiences, its climax does not come at the very last moment. This is illustrated excellently in Shakespeare's tragedies where, for instance, after the death of the leading character, there is likely to be a summary statement about him. In a service of worship there must be time for the experience to begin to find its place in the life patterns of the participants. If the service ends rapidly, if it is disturbed by people going out of the auditorium, if there is not silence and prayer, it is likely to be ruined at its most important moment. The most effective dramatic worship allows the heightened moment at the end of the sermon or prayer to have time to sink into the consciousness of the participants. The benediction and the choral Amen are all distinct attributes to the dramatic worship.

This matter of time and silence is of course an important part of the entire service. Time has always been important in the theatre and the so-called 'timing' of speaking and action is one of the first techniques that is learned by an actor. In the church timing must be a natural, spontaneous thing. It must grow out of feeling and become effective because it has genuine purpose. The speaking of lines effectively may mean that they are broken in the centre by silence or by inflections that give them heightened values. If this is done superficially, it is theatrical. If it is done with feeling, it is dramatic. Timing, therefore, in a service of worship is a matter of feeling the sense of the meeting. If a moment of silence after the prayer is needed, it must not be neglected. This is a matter of testing and judgement and feeling.

Silence is a dangerous thing. For most people silence is distracting. Only after long training can it be used effectively. More and more it is coming into Protestant worship because of the experiences of the Quakers. It should be brought back into worship but it must be used with judgement. It can be so effective that there is no other device comparable to it, or it can be so distracting that it dissipates the entire feeling and allows the mind and emotions to wander. There is no rule for silence. Its use and its values grow out of the feelings one must have and the sense that a leader can gather in knowing how much is necessary. Nothing is more dramatic when rightly used.

Dramatic worship will grow through experience. It may take upon itself techniques that come directly from the need of the moment, but it is likely to be effective only when there is consultation, co-operation and a continuous educational process. Dramatic worship is possible in the smallest church and in the largest congregation. Its success will depend upon how much worship is understood, how sincere is the leadership and how much time and preparation are put upon this integral part of the religious experience. It is the most unique contribution that the church has to make to the needs of people, for it combines the total congregational group experience with the spiritual relationship without which life is indeed poor. Unless non-liturgical Protestantism takes its worship more seriously and develops the opportunity for genuine worship experiences, the church will become more and more merely a social institution and will lose its most important contribution to society.

# Fifty Years of Scottish Theology\*

N. H. G. ROBINSON

The purpose of this paper is to indicate the principal trends of Scottish Theology during the first half of the twentieth century. Within its scope no attempt can be made to give an exhaustive treatment, intensively or extensively, of the particular contributions of individual theologians ; and references that may be made to those will of necessity be by way of illustrating more general movements of religious thought.

During the period under review there have been not a few individual contributions on particular aspects and doctrines of the Christian faith, contributions of considerable importance on the doctrine of eternal life, on the death of Jesus, on His Resurrection, and on Christology ; but for the most part, as it happens, these have been the fruit, not of a dogmatic specialism, but of an unbroken concern to tackle the fundamental theological problem of the time, namely, that of understanding religion against the background of modern life and in the light of modern knowledge. It is not accidental that perhaps the most common theological title during the period has been one which has set in relation to each other the Christian faith and the modern world.

## Apologetic in Character

This means of course that theological thinking in Scotland has been predominantly apologetic in character, and this is true even of the treatment of specifically dogmatic themes. Thus, while in his monumental work on *The Person of Jesus Christ*, H. R. Mackintosh not only made a clear-cut division between what he called the Immediate Utterances of Faith and what he called The Transcendent Implicates of Faith, but, writing in 1912, was also well aware that 'to abstain from all efforts to reach a constructive synthesis of the data which faith apprehends would, as is known, have been in harmony with well-marked and ably-championed tendencies of our time'<sup>1</sup>, and while, further, few were more ready than Mackintosh to allow that 'we are much more sure of our facts than of our theories'<sup>2</sup>, yet he found it impossible as an evangelical theologian to refrain from the work of synthesis because it did 'not seem possible to vindicate the absoluteness of Christ as an intelligent convic-

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\* By kind permission of the Study Department of the World Council of Churches.

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. vii.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 428n.



tion except by passing definitely into the domain of reasoned theory'. 'The revelation and self-sacrifice of God in Christ,' he says<sup>1</sup>, 'cannot really be presented to the mind without raising problems of an essentially speculative character. Hence there will always be metaphysic in theology, but it is the implicit metaphysic of faith, moving ever within the sphere of conscience.' Such a statement of course does not deny any and every distinction between dogmatics and apologetics, nor indeed would it be wise to deprive oneself of a useful division in one's subject; but Mackintosh's outlook on this matter—and it seems characteristic of twentieth century Scottish theology—does suggest that the distinction is at most one of degree. If the modern world with its criticisms and indifference falls into the background when the dogmatic domain is entered, it is yet implicitly present, in the mind of the theologian himself, as he wrestles with obscurities in his subject: and the whole enterprise, dogmatic and apologetic alike, is sustained by a thoroughly evangelical motive. Scottish theology has certainly declined to stop short of speculation, but it has at the same time and in large measure eschewed speculation which is empty, abstract and academic. On the other side, it must be supposed, although admittedly salvation is not by argument, it is only by an artifice that apologetic thought can be confined to the negative task of nullifying objection and restrained from passing over to the positive presentation of the Christian Gospel. At any rate, as a matter of fact, the apologetic work of the twentieth century in Scotland has been at least as much concerned to affirm what it has taken to be truth as to deny what it has regarded as error. The reason for, and the justification of, this merging of apologetics and dogmatics may well be found in the realization that in the modern period, even in traditionally Christian countries, Christianity has found itself confronted by rival outlooks, and that in consequence the opposition to it must be understood as no longer concerned so much with special doctrines but as extending, as one distinguished writer and teacher put it<sup>2</sup>, 'to the whole manner of conceiving of the world and of man's place in it'; but the method of meeting this new situation presupposes at least the conviction that the Christian faith can hold its own with its contemporary rivals, is rationally coherent, and even lends itself, in some measure, to what the same writer called 'a rational vindication'.<sup>3</sup>

### Science and the Christian Faith

One topic which has persistently engaged the theological attention during the period has been that of science and its relation to Christian faith. The rapid rise of natural science with its transformation of the natural scene past, present and future, and in particular with the rich potentialities of its evolutionary hypothesis, together with its remarkably successful mastery of physical forces and its consequent alteration of the conditions of life, set a considerable problem to religious thought. To many people of simple faith, as is well known, science appeared as the enemy of all religion, while the thinker, on the other hand, confident

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. viii.

<sup>2</sup> James Orr, *The Christian View of God and the World* (10th edition, 1893), p. 4.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

that reality could not contradict itself, was often tempted to try to discover in it a new ally and friend, as when James Orr, somewhat unconvincingly perhaps, found support in science for the Christian doctrine of man as the climax and end of creation, in that no evolutionist 'supposes that evolution is ever to reach a higher being than man; that whatever future development there is to be will not be development beyond humanity, but development within humanity.'<sup>1</sup>

The confidence that reality is self-consistent remains an inalienable conviction of religious thought but reaches a deeper level in D. S. Cairns when he goes beyond the particular dogmas of a changing science and distinguishes between science as such and the world-view of naturalism which does not follow from, but erects itself upon, science. The omission of God from the scientific domain is simply a methodological device, 'but Naturalism takes this methodological omission and transforms it into denial'.<sup>2</sup> Thus science ceases to be friend or foe to religion and is neutralized; and yet this neutrality, in turn, proves no more than a half-way house. In a recent brief but important essay on *Natural Science and the Spiritual Life* (1951) Principal John Baillie carries the discussion deeper still when he considers science in its character, not as certain particular conclusions, not as the body of scientific knowledge nor as its method, but as 'a certain general state of mind in the modern world'<sup>3</sup>, and accordingly conceives science and faith to 'represent not so much the outlooks of two different kinds of men as two elements that are together present, though in very varying degrees, in the minds of most of us'.<sup>4</sup> Dr. Baillie certainly agrees with Cairns that the scientific omission of God is only methodological, but in regarding science and faith, not as two abstractions set apart from human life, but as two elements in a single mind, he rules out the theory of neutrality as a final solution. Science is neutral, but only in the sense that it may be either an enemy or an ally to faith, although Principal Baillie believes that if it becomes an enemy to faith it is at odds with both its historical origin and its future development. It is then at odds with its historical origin because so long as the pagan idea held sway that the world emanated from God science was bound to work as best it could by means of deduction and it was the realization of the implications of the Christian doctrine of creation which wakened men's minds to the contingency of the world and set them working on experimental and inductive lines. Indeed not only is modern science an achievement of Christianity, but by virtue of the discipline of iron law and hard fact it is an indispensable element in the mature Christian life. On the other hand, as the enemy of faith science imperils its own future development which depends on 'the Christian virtues of humility, self-effacement, tolerance, impartiality, and a community of thought that transcends all distinctions of class or race or nation',<sup>5</sup> and no less in the long run on the conviction that natural process serves some overruling end. Here, it is clear, religious thinking impinges upon the potentialities of our mid-century modern world and raises fundamental issues of crucial importance to Christian and non-Christian alike.

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 133f.

<sup>2</sup> *The Riddle of the World* (1937), p. 48.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 37.



## The Christian Faith and the Modern World

Indeed, during the period under review, Scottish religious thinking has been persistently concerned to understand this modern world to which science is one, but only one, contributing factor, and in particular to understand the place of Christian faith within it. The inescapable fact of the twentieth century situation has been a prolonged moral and spiritual decline accompanied by a series of crises and catastrophes; and it is not surprising therefore that one important strand of contemporary thought has understood the modern world under the category of crisis and judgement. Scottish theology, on the other hand, has found its ruling concept, not in the idea of judgement alone, but in crisis and grace together, yielding and implying a more comprehensive category of what may be called evangelical preparation, a category in which at times, it must be admitted, the element of judgement has received less emphasis than the other. Thus D. S. Cairns refers to the confusion of ultimate faiths which the twentieth century inherited from the nineteenth and raises the question whether the right road is onward or 'back to the old track'. He himself had no doubt on the matter. 'I believe,' he says<sup>1</sup>, 'that a careful study of the conditions which have produced the current unsettlement of belief rather compels the conclusion that this great and apparently sinister movement of thought was inevitable, and that its necessity was not wholly or even mainly due to human weakness or sin, but that it lay in the very nature of the case'. Later in his argument he refers to three principal 'intellectual solvents', the scientific, the philosophical and the critical, and so far as the first of these is concerned, for example, he holds that the ages in which the traditional tenets of Christian faith were formulated were largely ignorant of the idea of natural law and of the uniformity of nature, and cannot therefore bind the Christian consciousness of a later, and, in certain respects, more enlightened, age. His conclusion on this point is quite clear and assured. 'No one who believes in God,' he says,<sup>2</sup> 'can doubt that it was His Hand which opened this new volume of His wisdom, and set His children the arduous task of reading the new knowledge into the old, and the old into the new'. And this conclusion is characteristic of his treatment of the whole topic, as is the title of one of his chapters, *The Modern Praeparatio Evangelica*.

Perhaps in this judgement, while rightly emphasizing the element of God's goodness, Cairns has under-stressed that of His severity. Perhaps, as we saw in an earlier connection, he has abstracted science and the other intellectual solvents too much from the human spirit whose activities they are, and perhaps, as a result, he has under-emphasized man's sin as a factor contributing to the human predicament. But it must be remembered that Cairns was here writing before the first World War. That too, when it came, was part of our education and preparation, and it served to direct attention to moral conditions and to emphasize the element of judgement in the discipline of life and history. In a later work, *The Reasonableness of the Christian Faith*, published in 1918, Cairns gave greater weight to the idea of sin as a necessary element in any Christian attempt to understand the modern movement

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<sup>1</sup> *Christianity in the Modern World* (2nd edition, 1907), p. xiv.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6.

of history, although he tended to identify it most clearly in this connection in the area and condition of international relations.

This understanding of the confusions of modern life and the modern world in terms of an evangelical preparation was shared by a friend of Cairns, John Oman, who, though a Scotsman, born in the island county of Orkney, spent most of his adult life in England as a servant of the Presbyterian Church there. While, however, Oman approached his contemporary scene with the idea of preparation rather than that of judgement alone, and while, like Cairns, he raised the question whether the right path lay backwards or forwards and insistently proclaimed the latter alternative, he did not conceive the problem in the almost exclusively intellectual terms favoured by his contemporary. Life is more than knowledge, and its discipline serves more than a merely intellectual purpose, although it is of course a purpose which has an intellectual side. 'The spiritual problem cannot be solved by evading the intellectual. Obscurantism is already unbelief. . . . What is true for faith may be much greater, but it cannot be in contradiction to what is true for thought. Yet our experience is always more than we can explain and our vision deeper than our understanding, and every right guidance in the end depends on what we see.'<sup>1</sup> The fundamental character of present-day life is that 'All authority has been questioned, and moral as well as intellectual confusion has ensued.'<sup>2</sup> External authority has been undermined and the belief has grown up 'that only what we see to be true is truth for us and only what we judge to be right is righteous'. 'This,' he adds,<sup>3</sup> 'is the principle of freedom, and the chaos of our time would seem to be its outcome. But is the cause freedom itself or failure to rise to its responsibility? This is our supreme question.' In such a situation the temptation to move backwards is not unintelligible, but then 'blind reverence for the past is made a matter of faith, though the chief lesson of the past is that the face of faith is always forward'.<sup>4</sup> 'There is no breadth of judgement without help from the past, but there is no using the past to good purpose without independent judgement on it of our own conscience of truth and right.'<sup>5</sup> The underlying problem then is the problem of faith and freedom, of vision and authority, of understanding grace in a way compatible with the mature nature of a moral personality; and its solution is not an attainment of the past but an aspiration of the future.

As Oman sees it and as he says again and again, the age of the infallibilities has gone and gone for good. There is no going back to it, the age of an infallible Church and the age of an infallible Book. He emphasizes that Christ Himself wrote nothing and so deliberately deprived us of a certain kind of security. 'The end of such a security of literal infallibility would have been to set up a merely external authority, to which men would have conformed their words but not their thoughts, their deeds but not their hearts.'<sup>6</sup> But an external authority amid the confusions of the present time would be a sad

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<sup>1</sup> *Vision and Authority* (2nd edition, 1928), p. 23.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19.

<sup>3</sup> *Honest Religion* (1941), p. 9.

<sup>4</sup> *Grace and Personality* (1917), p. 10.

<sup>5</sup> *Honest Religion*, pp. 13f.

<sup>6</sup> *Vision and Authority*, p. 127.



anachronism and its setting up a turning back of the clock. Historically men have sought security in various kinds of finality, such as fixed organizations, fixed ideals and fixed theologies; and yet these are 'just what life is appointed to disturb'. The way is forward, in faith and hope and love; but to say that is only to make a beginning and Oman never claimed to have done more. He was much more clearly and acutely aware of the magnitude of the task than that of his own contribution. The problem was a problem of life and history as well as thought, a practical problem as well as an intellectual one.

### In Relation to Contemporary Radical Protestantism

The question arises, however, from the point of view of the radical Protestantism of today, whether even this more comprehensive concept of a *praeparatio evangelica* as a practical and not merely as an intellectual phenomenon is adequate to the Christian understanding of the modern world. Radical Protestantism would tend to answer this question in the negative, to set aside the concept of a *praeparatio evangelica* and to replace it by the category of judgement and crisis. But it will be recalled that we have already insisted that the idea of an evangelical preparation includes that of judgement and that the latter is capable of more or less emphasis. That being so, the alternative to Oman's outlook is not necessarily the category of crisis as a completely different concept, but may be instead an idea of the *praeparatio evangelica* which gives even greater stress to the element of judgement than Oman gave. It can scarcely be questioned that a vital factor in the modern situation, which cannot be neglected or ignored with impunity, is the spiritual pride and pretension, that is, the sin of modern man, the spiritual pride and pretension which largely stem from the vastly increased mastery over his physical environment which man has in the last century or two achieved, and which issue in the conviction that man is the supreme measure of life and destiny, 'the master of his fate, the captain of his soul'. It is this element in the modern scene upon which radical Protestantism has seized and which lends to it whatever justification it may have.

This insight has not been lacking from more recent Scottish theology, but it is especially noteworthy that it is given a prominent place in the work of an earlier theologian who was a Scotsman but who, both by religious denomination and by the chosen place of his life and work, stands somewhat aside from the movement of Scottish religious thought and belongs almost as much to England, P. T. Forsyth. In his eyes the fact of sin, 'world sin, sin in dominion, sin solidary if not hereditary, yea, sin which integrates us into a Satanic Kingdom',<sup>1</sup> is the predominant factor in every human situation and in ours; and accordingly history must be viewed 'under the category of judgement . . . and not under that of progress. Eschatology goes much deeper than evolution'.<sup>2</sup> It is not difficult to see why of recent years a revival of interest should have taken place in Forsyth's theology, and why it should have been hailed as in some degree an important anticipation of Dr. Barth's. Yet it is not clear

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<sup>1</sup> *The Justification of God* (1916), p. 25.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 185.

that Forsyth would have sided completely with radical Protestantism, nor whether, chronology apart, his thought is most adequately understood as a radical alternative to Oman's or as a radical development of it. To stress sin, as Forsyth does, as the essential human factor is not to rule out the idea of a *praeparatio evangelica*, for God makes even the wrath of man to praise Him and human sin to redound to His own glory.

What does seem, however, to be decisive in favour of Forsyth's classification as representing a radical development of a position like Oman's is the emphasis which he lays upon morality. This emphasis can scarcely itself be over-emphasized. 'In Christ', he says<sup>1</sup>, 'God is not preached but present. . . . He does more than justify faith, He creates it . . . . we believe because He makes us believe—with a moral compulsion'. Christ is 'the Redeemer, The Redeemer of conscience, the Holy Redeemer. Who thus masters conscience is King of men. He masters man's inner master'.<sup>2</sup> And he warns us against putting the old and the new humanity 'out of all organic connection whatever'.<sup>3</sup> Forsyth complained that current religion was anthropocentric, concerned with 'man and his weal' instead of 'God and His glory'; and yet he could speak of the 'precious place' and 'great rights' of this kind of religion as 'the first stage of sainthood' for 'whereas we begin with "God for us" by His grace, we end with "We for God" by our faith'.<sup>4</sup> Even more important in the present connection, he could speak of 'the great function of Christian history' as 'the moralization of love'.<sup>5</sup> Judgement there is in life, but it is the judgement of the Cross. 'The last judgement took place in principle in that Cross' and 'we are living in the midst of it' and 'all history is working it into detail'.<sup>6</sup> In the Bible 'a salvation without judgement is not thought of, nor a judgement without salvation' 'For the Bible as a whole, history, rising to the Cross and spreading from it, is viewed under this category of saving judgement and not that of civilized progress'.<sup>7</sup>

It seems permissible therefore, and indeed necessary, to take Forsyth's theology as contributing along with those of Cairns and Oman to an adequate conception of a *praeparatio evangelica*; and if this is so it almost compels the judgement that a striking characteristic of Scottish theology has been one which combines live movement with massive consistency. This verdict is in fact borne out by an examination of the theological understanding of the Christian faith from which the theological understanding of the modern world has issued and to which attention must now be turned.

### Middle Course

During the period Scottish theology has been keenly aware of movements of thought in other parts of the world, particularly on the continent of Europe, but on the whole, although it has learned much indeed from these, it has steered a middle course of its own which is symbolized by the fact that it stands on one side of Ritschlianism at the beginning of the period and on the other side of Barthianism at its end. It has found both movements stimulating and provocative but has been

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 44.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 54.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 20.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 66.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 189.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 21.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 197.



constrained to commit itself to neither. James Orr, writing at the end of the nineteenth century, was sensitive to the appeal of Ritschlianism, 'that, addressing itself to an age profoundly distrustful of reason in its metaphysical flights, enamoured of the methods of the positive sciences, yet craving a ground of religious certainty which neither philosophy nor science can give, it mirrors back to that age with unerring fidelity its own dissatisfactions and desires'.<sup>1</sup> Yet in the end Orr comes to a critical conclusion which represents evangelical faith as wiser than Ritschlianism in that it 'does not base its faith on theoretic reason; but neither will it place reason under the ban, or refuse what friendly aid reason can give it. It will welcome light from all quarters. It will not think a doctrine condemned because, besides being Christian, it can likewise be shown to be rational'.<sup>2</sup> Scottish theology was certainly greatly stimulated by Ritschl's thought without being captivated by it, and its fundamental objection seems to have been that in Ritschl's hands the important principle of value-judgement became a pruning-knife which cut off some of the fruits, as well as some of the roots, of Christian faith. It represented a curious combination of moralism with anti-rationalism in theology which attracted while it repelled the Scottish theological mind.

In the later part of the period a similar reaction is to be found to the theology of Dr. Barth and of radical Protestantism in general. Again Scottish theology has been keenly aware of this movement and very considerably indebted to it, and yet on the whole it has been unconvinced by its combination of anti-rationalism and anti-moralism. Thus, while he is in complete agreement with the contemporary emphasis upon God's revelation of Himself, Dr. John Baillie finds himself bound to reject the idea that it is by an act of omnipotence that God creates faith in the human heart. 'There is miracle enough,' he says,<sup>3</sup> 'in what God does for us in Christ, but it is not a miracle of this kind. It is, in fact, not a miracle of sheer omnipotence, but a *miracle of grace*'. And, as a corollary to this, he insists that 'total wickedness is a self-destroying conception'.<sup>4</sup>

There have of course been changes of emphasis. It is sufficient to contrast Dr. Baillie's earlier definition of religion as 'a moral trust in reality' and his later account of it as the characteristic disturbance set up in the human soul by its confrontation with the transcendent holiness of God.<sup>5</sup> But in spite of these and in spite of individual divergences of varying importance, certain broad features are undoubtedly discernible.

First of all, it is affirmed by one thinker after another that there is a close, intimate and indissoluble connection between morality and religion. In his later work Dr. Baillie was no longer content to define religion as a moral trust in reality, but he still regarded any 'dissociation of the ultimate springs of our moral consciousness from all that is religious . . . to be as fatal to a true understanding of the essence of morality as of the essence of religion'<sup>6</sup>; while H. R. Mackintosh declares that 'all higher

<sup>1</sup> *The Ritschlian Theology and the Evangelical Faith*, p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 242f.

<sup>3</sup> *Our Knowledge of God*, p. 24.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 32.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. *The Interpretation of Religion*, p. 318 and *Our Knowledge of God*, p. 3.

<sup>6</sup> *Our Knowledge of God*, p. 242.

knowledge of God comes through moral and religious experience', that 'revelation in quality is moral' and that 'it attests itself freely to conscience and feeling'.<sup>1</sup> The witness on this point is impressive in its unanimity: but it must be emphasized that in giving so central a place to the moral consciousness and its insights Scottish theology has not understood morality in terms of the natural law but as an awareness of an infinite claim whose content may be variously apprehended but whose clamour cannot be escaped. From this point of view, the idea of natural law would seem to represent an undue simplification and a misleading misrepresentation of the moral consciousness. Our awareness of duty is akin, not to the intuition of mathematical propositions for example, but to our knowledge of God. Indeed the claim of morality and the claim of God upon a man's life are in the last resort one claim.

Similarly, Scottish theology has been quite clear that there is a kinship between faith and reason, but it has been far from regarding religious conviction as if it were the conclusion of an argument. Faith is rather a moral and rational response to the reality of God as displayed in revelation. It is revelation and not reason that produces faith, but reason enters into the nature of faith and faith is neither an irrational nor a non-rational activity of the human spirit. The general view seems to be that reason helps to clarify the convictions of faith, not from without but from within, and, inside the area of faith, has its own legitimate interests; but it is always reason enlightened by revelation and unaided reason appears in this context as an unreal abstraction. In this connection it is interesting to recall that James Orr, who allowed that the cosmological, teleological and ontological arguments had a cumulative effect, hastened to add that corresponding to each of these there was 'a direct fact of consciousness which turned the logical argument into a real one—which translated, if I may so speak, the abstract proof into a living experience'.<sup>2</sup>

A third predominant feature of Scottish theology has been its evangelical concern for the integrity of the Gospel. If the mark of liberalism is not only as W. P. Paterson suggested, to magnify the importance of the general revelation to reason and conscience, but also to sit loosely to the whole idea of special revelation, then liberalism has in the period made little impression upon Scottish religious thinking, and consequently there is on the whole no movement to be discerned from liberalism to a more evangelical faith. What may be discerned, however, is something rather different, namely, a tendency in the early part of the period to contract the interpretation of the revelation of God in Christ within the scale of our ordinary moral understanding, and, so, not to deny, but to *minimize*, its effect upon the moral outlook of ordinary men, and to represent this effect as little more than the divine vindication of our morality. Further, since that is so, what may also be discerned is a movement of religious thought from this position to one which more adequately recognizes the element of disturbance, judgement and radical re-orientation present in this effect; and this movement corresponds closely to the transition already noted from an idea of the *praeparatio evangelica* which does not emphasize divine

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<sup>1</sup> *The Christian Apprehension of God*, p. 70 and p. 90.

<sup>2</sup> *The Christian View of God and the World*, p. 106.



judgement to an idea of it which does lay considerable stress upon this element.

Writing in 1932, W. P. Paterson said of Scottish theology that it 'has taken up the mediating position which was to be expected from its spiritual and intellectual history. It is modernist in that it makes use of the scriptural data as they are expounded by Biblical Theology on the basis of the results of Biblical Criticism, and also in that, instead of feeling itself committed to polemics against the scientific view of the universe and man, it is prepared to profit by the new knowledge so far as it is relevant to the dogmatic task. It is positive in that it accepts it as a theological axiom that God was revealed in Christ for the salvation of mankind, and confidently values the Bible as the authoritative record and interpretation of the gospel of divine grace'.<sup>1</sup> The verdict remains substantially true. In its attempt to understand both the modern world and its own faith Scottish theology has steered a middle course between liberalism on the one hand and radical Protestantism on the other. Against the former it has displayed a constant concern for the integrity of the Gospel and the saving revelation of God's grace in Jesus Christ His Son; while over against the latter it has on the whole insisted that the revelation is one of grace and man's response in faith to this Christian salvation is a moral rational response, but in doing so it has also implied that such ideas as those of 'natural law', 'unaided reason' and even 'natural theology' are inadequate representations of reason and morality and indeed unreal abstractions. As Dr. John Baillie has said, 'there is in man no *nature* apart from *revelation*'.<sup>2</sup>



## AUTHORS AND REVIEWERS IN THIS NUMBER

Rev. C. E. Abraham, Principal, Serampore College, Serampore.

The Rt. Rev. A. J. Appasamy, Bishop in Coimbatore, The Church of South India.

Rev. K. D. Wilson Anand, Literature Secretary, Church of India, Burma and Ceylon, and Lecturer, Henry Martyn School of Islamic Studies, Aligarh.

Mr. Harold Ehrensperger, Managing Editor, *Indian Journal of Theology* and Assistant Professor of Journalism, Hislop College, Nagpur.

Rev. Peter de D. May, Principal, Bishop's College, Calcutta.

Rev. B. F. Price, Professor of Old Testament, Serampore College, Serampore.

Rev. N. H. G. Robinson, Minister, Rothesay, Isle of Bute, Scotland.

Rev. E. Sambayya, Vice-Principal, Bishop's College, Calcutta.

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<sup>1</sup> *The Rule of Faith*, p. 408.

<sup>2</sup> *Our Knowledge of God*, p. 41.

# Book Reviews

## Among Some Recent Books

The appearance of the new American translation of the Old Testament has been eagerly awaited ever since the publication of the New Testament in the Revised Standard Version. The completion of *The Holy Bible: Revised Standard Version*<sup>1</sup> which was published in September, 1952, marks an important stage in the history of Bible translation. In producing a new version of the Old Testament, scholars are faced with textual problems which differ from those encountered by the New Testament translator. The 19th century Old Testament revisers considered that their textual problems were simpler than those of their New Testament colleagues, since they 'thought it most prudent to adopt the Massoretic Text as the basis of their work.' Their 20th century successors have been more realistic in their approach, and have made free use of the ancient versions to remedy the defects of the traditional Hebrew text, and have even made conjectural emendations unsupported by the versions. Thus in the book of Hosea alone they have departed from the present Hebrew text in more than sixty places, so making a far more intelligible translation than their predecessors. The versions have been followed with profit in such passages as I Sam. xiv : 41 ; I Kings viii : 12, where the RV does not include the improved text in the margin. The translators have accepted the familiar conjecture ('plough the sea') in Amos vi : 12 and the proper names in the following verse, along with 'Ashima' in viii : 14. They have been candid enough to admit that some figures must have dropped out from I Sam. xiii : 1 instead of following the compromise in the RV. In addition to those involving a change in the text, many welcome innovations appear in the translation, though these appear for the most part to be based on earlier researches, which may in this way be given a wider publicity. (e.g. Micah ii : 6 ; Jonah ii : 6 and Jer. x : 5—'their idols are like scarecrows in a cucumber field.') In many places the translators have accepted the readings which the earlier revisers put in their margin, though in places they appear to have been over-cautious. The language has been modernized, so that archaic verbal forms have been abandoned, and the 2nd person singular pronoun is only used when God is addressed. The poetical passages in the prophetic books are set out in verse form, an improvement on the limited use of that form in the RV. Those who are accustomed to the RV with marginal references will regret the lack of all but a small selection of these in the present revision. But it is difficult for the Biblical translator to please everybody. On the one hand there are those who will complain that the translators have not been radical

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<sup>1</sup> Thomas Nelson & Sons Ltd. 30s.



enough in their departures from the RV, while there are others who will criticize them for failing to support the AV to which they are accustomed. (There has already been some unjustified criticism of the use of the expression 'young woman' instead of 'virgin' in Is. vii: 14). But we have good reason to be grateful for what we are offered here, and those engaged in Bible translation or revision in this country are certain to be helped by using the Revised Standard Version.

*Myth in the New Testament*<sup>1</sup> is the seventh volume in the series entitled 'Studies in Biblical Theology.' In the preface the author, Professor Ian Henderson of Glasgow University, states that 'the aim of this small book is to introduce English-speaking readers to a controversy which has already proved fruitful in German theology.' The controversy to which he is referring is that between Bultmann, the Christian existentialist, and his opponents who cannot agree with his policy of 'de-mythologizing' Christianity. It has arisen out of the problem of communication, which faces the Church here no less than in the West;—how is it possible to make a 1st century gospel intelligible to 20th Century man? In confronting men with the Gospel, must it still be wrapped up in a primitive mythology which was not, in the first place, specifically Christian? Perhaps our natural answer to this question is No. But if we try to eliminate the mythological, what happens to the historicity of the Gospel? Where are we to draw the line between what we retain and what we reject? Bultmann considers that the elimination of the mythological element by Liberalism was a wrong approach, and that its interpretation in terms of a decision concerning one's existence is the true solution. That is to say, man has basically the same need now as in the 1st century, and what God has done in Christ, He has done for all, however differently they may interpret that achievement. Hence the Cross is both a historical event and at the same time an 'eschatological' event, that is to say, an event of decisive importance for each one of us *now*. For the historical to have this significance, the mythological is not essential,—it cannot make a man decide for or against Christ. 'Since the mythological does not prove the eschatological nature of the historical event of Christ, there is no point in retaining it.' But that raises the question why we should make an ultimate decision for or against a completely 'demythologized' Christ rather than any other human figure. Bultmann's opponents claim that we cannot avoid using 'myth,' however hard we try,—all we can do is to substitute one form for another. Are we not impoverishing our religious thought by trying to detach it from the vivid language of mythology in the interest of historical accuracy? This book raises many such questions, and should provoke some fruitful discussion. It is to be hoped that the reading of this short volume may stimulate some Indian theologian to pursue Bultmann's discussion further, with a view to performing a like service for the Church in this country, as she faces the problem of the communication of the Gospel in a cultural setting unlike that to which Bultmann addresses himself.

The eighth volume in the same series, *God Who Acts*,<sup>2</sup> also touches on the subject of de-mythologizing the Gospel, and the author, Professor

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<sup>1</sup> S. C. M. Press. 7s.

<sup>2</sup> S. C. M. Press. 8s.

G. E. Wright of Chicago, here criticizes Bultmann for laying such stress on individual decision that he underestimates the meaning of history. 'In order to present the proclamation of the Lord of history we can only use the Biblical myths : there is no other way of communicating Biblical truth.' It is, in fact, 'proclamation' which is the subject of this book, in which it is maintained that 'Biblical theology is the confessional recital of the redemptive acts of God in a particular history, because history is the chief medium of revelation.' The growing interest in Biblical theology is a feature of Christian thought which has made itself felt in this country, and this book is an excellent introduction to the subject. It is significant that the sub-title of the book is 'Biblical Theology as Recital', although the author is more concerned with the Old Testament than with the New, as may be seen from a glance at the index of Biblical references. This is because he is pleading for a recognition of the organic unity of the whole Bible, in place of the present tendency to look upon the New Testament and Psalms as 'the real Christian canon'. In maintaining his point of view, Dr. Wright makes some outstanding pronouncements, which will meet with opposition from those who look upon the Old Testament as simply one among many records of the human search for God which has been fulfilled in Christ. The God revealed in the Old Testament 'destroys the whole basis of pagan religion.' In fact, the Old and New Testaments stand together as a unique revelation of God in action, over against all other religions, which fail to take history seriously. The Israelite view of nature and history is not something for which we can give a naturalistic or evolutionary explanation. 'It is the one primary, irreducible datum of Biblical theology, without antecedents in the environment whence it might have evolved.' The nearest attempt we can make at an explanation of it is in terms of the Exodus experience. Just as we have come to realize the basic importance of the early *kerygma* for an understanding of the faith of the Early Church, so we must recognize that the faith of Israel was expressed primarily in a precisely analogous manner (e.g. Deut. vi: 20-24; xxvi: 5-9; Josh. xxiv: 2-13), although occasionally we meet with a more abstract confession, as in Ex. xxxiv: 6, 7. But we must bear in mind that an essential part of the primitive Christian *kerygma* was the proclamation that the coming of Christ was the fulfilment of the Old Testament scriptures, so that He is 'the climactic event in God's redemptive history.' The writers of the New Testament related the coming of Christ to Old Testament history by means of Typology, which understands past events so that 'they possess their own original historical significance, but the eye of faith can discern that God has also set them as previews or types which point to greater or more complete facts',—in which it differs from Allegory, which fails to do justice to history. It must be admitted that there are times when it is not quite clear whether Dr. Wright himself really accepts the historicity of the events which he describes, as for example, the Sinai Covenant, which is sometimes treated as an inference from the Exodus experience and sometimes as a historic event. And at one point the typology appears to get out of control and Moses is said to have been 'saved from Pharaoh's slaughter of the Egyptian first-born'! Dr. Wright finds it difficult to fit the wisdom literature into his interpretation of the Old Testament as a recital of God's saving acts, but he does not make a virtue



of systematization, and the book can be unreservedly recommended to those who seek an answer to the question, 'But what is Biblical Theology ?'

The scholar who has done most in recent years to remind us of the importance of the New Testament *kerygma* is undoubtedly Dr. C. H. Dodd, and he may be said to have returned to this theme in a lecture delivered a year ago in London, and now published as *The Old Testament in the New*.<sup>1</sup> His main theme is the conscious appeal by the New Testament writers to the Old Testament as a source of authority for the Church. Dodd, like Wright, distinguishes the New Testament writers' use of the Old Testament from allegorizing, such as was employed by Philo. Moreover, he claims that the passages used are quoted not simply for their own sake, but as pointing to the context in which they are situated, a context which they believed could throw light on the situation in which they found themselves. Dr. Dodd draws our attention to Acts ii: 23, and claims that the paradox of Peter's assertion can only be resolved by seeing in the Old Testament the pattern for the events of the New. This pattern is most clearly seen in certain frequently quoted passages,—Is. liii; Ps. lxix; Dan. vii; Joel ii-iii; Zech. ix-xiv; Is. vi-ix. 'All these illustrate, in the last resort, varying aspects of the one divine plan now brought to its fulfilment in the events of the Gospel story.' The theme which runs through all these passages and the theme of the New Testament *kerygma* is one and the same, namely, humiliation and adversity followed by exaltation and achievement. And these past events were relevant to the New Testament preachers and writers because they saw themselves 'living through the drama of disaster and glory, of death and resurrection, which in a variety of ways, and with greater or less elaboration, is the "plot" of them all.' Moreover, since Jesus as Son of Man includes in Himself the whole of the New Israel, His death and resurrection 'are seen as the fulfilment of the whole purpose of God to raise up for Himself, through suffering, tribulation and disaster, a people made wholly one in Him and devoted to His righteous purpose.' Hence the appropriateness of Hos. vi: 1-3, with its reference to the raising up of *Israel* as the passage to which Paul looks back in I Cor. xv: 4. The pamphlet,—for it is hardly more than that,—is a brief one, and the treatment of it here must necessarily be brief. Nevertheless, its size is no indication of its value, and in these days of expensive books it is definitely a bargain at two shillings.

B. F. PRICE.

*The Liturgy of the Church of South India*, by T. S. Garrett. (O.U.P. Rupees Two. 1952.)

This little book of some ninety pages consists of two parts, an introduction to, and a commentary on, 'The Service of the Lord's Supper' as authorized by the Church of South India. The introduction, based largely on Archbishop Brilioth's book, 'Eucharistic Faith and Practice', is a straightforward exposition of sacramental theology. The

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<sup>1</sup> University of London: The Athlone Press. 2s.



commentary that follows deals in detail with the different parts of the Liturgy of the Church of South India, drawing out the principles underlying its shape and explaining its different actions and prayers. In an Appendix Mr. Garrett adds 'Proposals for Revision' made since the Liturgy was first published in June, 1950.

The introduction, as exposition of sacramental and eucharistic theology, will be most valuable to laymen and clergy (though it ought to be already familiar to the latter) not only in the Church of South India, but also elsewhere in India. The commentary on the Liturgy of the Church of South India will naturally be of most value to members of that Church, and will undoubtedly help them to a deeper understanding of their worship; but all who are interested in the development of a Liturgy native to Indian soil will find much of interest here too, since the Liturgy is one that has its origin in India and many prayers and actions in it have been found satisfying in an Indian setting.

Perhaps in the next edition the text of the Liturgy could be included, as unless one is very familiar with it, the commentary fails in its purpose. Otherwise this is an admirable book, and may be commended to all who wish to know something not only of the worship of the Church of South India but also of the elementary principles of sacramental theology.

PETER de D. MAY.

*Christ's Hope of the Kingdom*, by Alexander McLeish. World Dominion Press, London, pp. 165. Price Rs. 6.

Here is a fresh study of the 'Hope of the Kingdom', which is at once illuminating, disturbing and challenging in a rare degree.

The book is divided into two sections, Section I dealing with the Hope of the Kingdom in the New Testament, and Section II dealing with that Hope today. In the first Section, the author, surveying Christ's teaching, shows in their right perspective the different aspects of the Kingdom, thus giving a valuable corrective to wrong interpretations and misunderstandings that are sometimes current in the Church today. He stresses the fact that for Christ and His disciples the Kingdom of God represented not a vague, pious idealism, but a concept that dominates life and challenges it to action. His exposition deals with such leading ideas as God's right over the affairs of men, the hope of the Kingdom centering in Christ, the nearness of the Kingdom, the elimination of the time element from the conception of the Kingdom, the Kingdom as a way of life and an emerging world order, the Kingdom as the domain of the spirit and of a spirit-filled community, the consummation of the Kingdom in history; and in the treatment of these important themes the author reveals penetrating insight and a commendable sense of proportion, though he attempts a most difficult task in compressing his discussion of fundamental truths into a relatively short space.

The author comes to grips with modern problems in the life and thought of the Church, in the second Section of the book, where his clear understanding and refreshing treatment make this part of the book of special value to leaders of churches and missions in India and elsewhere. He maintains that the principle of integration, so much in our



thoughts today, has a new relevance in relation to the programmes and policies of the Church. For example, he says, evangelism should be integrated to those other factors that make up the objective of the Church, as in the primitive church Kerygma, Koinonia and Diakonia were bound together; 'These three factors are not separable in action' (p. 102). . . . . 'there is no such thing as evangelism without the emerging fellowship' (p. 104). 'On the one hand we have had too much mere proclamation and too little building up of the "believing community" into the fully functioning Church, and on the other too much pastoral care of the sheltered community, with too little witnessing zeal' (p. 105). Similarly in expounding the nature of the missionary obligation the author pleads for an integrated view of the elements constituting evangelism, such as personal testimony, the witness of the Christian fellowship, and the experience of the power of the Holy Spirit, an experience that the Church of our generation needs to regain.

In the last two chapters, the writer, like a good preacher preaching for a verdict, brings all his powers of persuasion to bear upon his readers, calling upon them to adopt new attitudes toward the tasks confronting churches and missions in the world today. Here and in many other parts of the book one recognizes the voice of a veteran missionary statesman speaking out of his experience and pronouncing upon current problems in a truly ecumenical spirit. He says, 'The Church must be the most revolutionary force in the world today' (p. 93), 'To be its true self is the Church's only mission' (p. 104), 'We have, paradoxically, to forget the "Kingdom" and concentrate on God Himself and His righteousness, and then, and then alone, will the social justice and human betterment which men long for be found' (p. 146).

Ministers and missionaries of the Church in India should seriously study this challenging volume and bring its ideas to the rank and file of the membership of the Church in such a way as to grip their imagination.

C. E. ABRAHAM.



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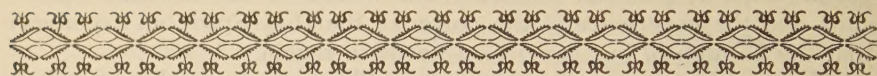
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